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—Francis J. Keenan

THE

Commonweal

Italian War of Words

by Gunnar D. Kumlien

The New Conservatism

by William V. Shannon

Volume LXI, No. 13 December 31, 1954 Twenty Cents

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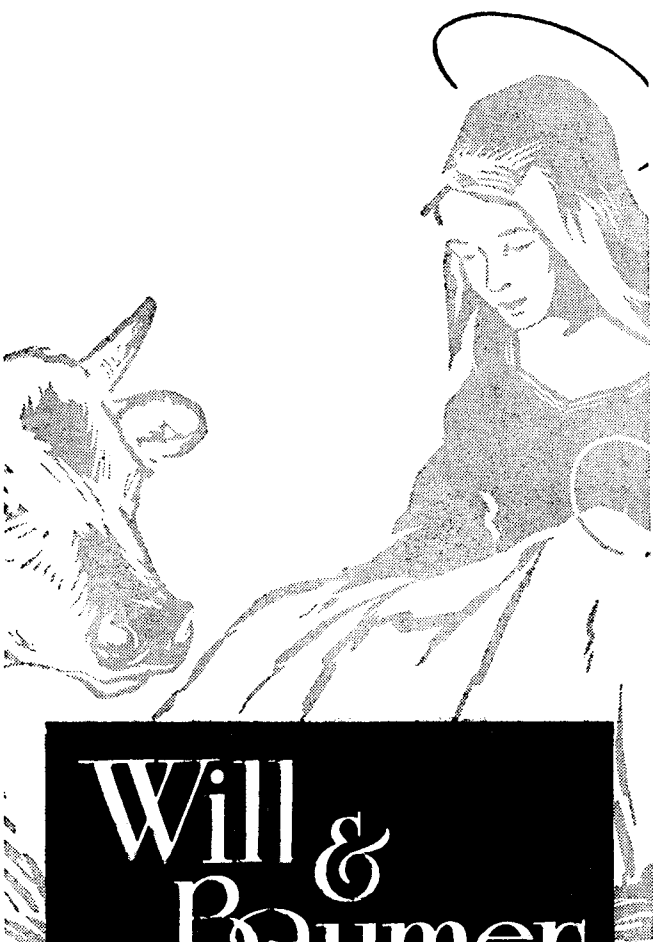
And she brought forth her firstborn son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes, and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

St. Luke 2:7



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THIS WEEK

Week by Week 347

Italian War of Words
by Gunnar D. Kumlien 351

Life in the Living Room
by John Stanley 354

The Censure of Senator McCarthy
by Francis J. Keenan 356

The Stage
by Richard Hayes 358

The Screen
by Philip T. Hartung 359

The New Conservatism
by William V. Shannon 360

Books 364

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Editor
EDWARD S. SKILLIN

Managing Editor
JAMES O'GARA

Associate Editors
WILLIAM P. CLANCY, WILLIAM PFAFF

Contributing Editors:
PHILIP BURNHAM
JOHN C. CORT
ANNE FREMANTLE
PHILIP T. HARTUNG
RICHARD HAYES

JOHN BRUBAKER: *Advertising Manager*

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THE

Commonweal

week by week

STILL MORE SO

THE fact that many business leaders take the occasion of the year's end publicly to count their blessings and to estimate their immediate prospects affords meaningful glimpses into our nation's and our society's state of health. All prognostications need not be taken at their face value to serve as useful signposts.

Certain groups of Americans remain outside the dominant pattern. There are hard-hit industries and depressed areas; there is the national aggregate of three million unemployed; farm prices and receipts from farm products continue moderately to decline from their peaks of recent years. Negroes in a number of states, North and South, suffer from grave educational, employment and housing disabilities. Even at this late day there are appalling city slums in addition to the disgraceful living and working conditions among our migratory farm laborers.

But much of this is happily in sharp contrast with the general pattern of increasing material well-being the country over. The percentage of home ownership is steadily rising; three-fifths of all American families now own their own homes. Moreover, various old-line suburbs are developing suburbs of their own to attract younger American families intent on securing sunlight, fresh air and comparative freedom from traffic hazards for their children. This movement away from population centers has a lot to do with the building boom in residential housing and furnishings.

Second only to the construction of new houses is the amount of home alteration and modernization that is going on. American homes become more livable all the time. All but two per cent of them have electricity, while a large majority have artificial refrigeration (90 per cent), vacuum cleaners, electric irons and the rest.

Leisure time is ever more amply provided for. There are few homes without at least one radio—more than a hundred million radios in all. By spring seven out of ten homes will have television sets as well. With paid vacations now a regular feature of union contracts, Americans are traveling more and getting to know other sections of state and country. This provides an impetus to the widely fluctuating auto industry, which is suddenly experiencing another boom. Seven out of ten American families had cars at the end of 1954, and the present buying and production rush points to a record sale of the 1955 models.

THERE are a number of signs that Americans enjoy increasingly better health. They are more long-lived. Meat (146.8 lbs. annually) and milk (352 lbs.) provide increasing amounts of body-building proteins year after year. For many of our compatriots the hazard is rather that of over-eating, and even then vast hoards of nourishing foodstuffs lie piled up in government and other warehouses, unused.

In other words, as this rather lengthy catalogue indicates, Americans now enjoy a general degree of material well-being hitherto unknown in human history. Except for periodic depressions this nation has always done comparatively well. But so much has recently been added to our normal prosperous state that in the estimation of *U. S. News and World Report* the American standard of living —in terms of actual consumption—has risen by twenty-five per cent in the past decade.

Great things can understandably be expected of a people which is in such large measure liberated from the wearing pressures of involuntary poverty and chronic ill health. Continually expanding productivity of socially useful goods and services is only one of them. Much of former domestic drudgery has been eliminated by the household appliances developed by our technicians and by those from other lands. Radio and television have brought experiences and insights of the outside world into our very homes—if we will but exercise the faculty of intelligent selection. Our cars and highways can bring us into contact with other communities and other ways and thereby mitigate

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always dangerous tendencies toward provincialism and parochialism.

And if we should remain complacent about our material success, there are always the Communist world and A-bombs to jolt and challenge us. There are, besides, the colonial peoples and the inhabitants of other underdeveloped lands whose resentment against their plight and the whole present state of things should put us on our mettle. With comparatively few material anxieties of our own to harass us we have an opportunity and a responsibility seldom if ever proffered to a major nation. Our future depends on the extent to which we recognize the true nature of our present position and project a viable future for ourselves and other nations.

NOW THE RIGHT

THE House Un-American Activities Committee has often been criticized for its concentration on the left, while ignoring extremists on the other end of the political spectrum. As if in delayed reaction to such complaints, the Committee recently issued a sharp condemnation of "neo-Fascists and hate groups" in the United States which, it said, can do "as great a violence to our national institutions as do those on the extreme left."

The Committee's report singled out for attention the National Renaissance party whose activities it described as "clearly subversive and un-American," and it asked the Justice Department to prosecute this group under the anti-subversive Smith act, the same law under which the Communist leaders were sent to jail. Also cited by the Committee, but without any request for prosecution, was the semi-monthly publication called *Common Sense*, an extremist sheet published in New Jersey by Conde McGinley and widely distributed by right-wing groups around the country. House investigators called this publication "a clearing house for hate propagandists throughout the country."

The discovery of neo-Fascism by the House Un-American Activities Committee is a welcome, if belated, development. Most Americans seem to be unaware of the fact that ten years after Hitler publications like *Common Sense* continue to spew hate and ignorance around the country, month after month, and comparatively little has been done about them. To expose such enterprises to the light of day is a good and noble work, and on this score we are with the Committee one hundred per cent. But the suggestion that the National Renaissance party should be prosecuted under the Smith act leaves us far from enthusiastic.

With the Committee's designation of this group as Fascist there can be no quarrel. The party follows the Hitlerian line quite openly. It seeks to arouse hatred and to set American against American. It appeals to ignorance and prejudice. Its most fanatic followers attend meetings dressed in a uniform of a sort, with dark caps and trousers and brassards on which a lightning bolt takes the place of the swastika. Like Hitler, the leaders of the National Renaissance party try to exploit the dangers of Communism in order to win converts for another form of subversion, Fascism.

These similarities to European Fascism are all present. But there they end. The National Renaissance party is reported to have a membership of between two and seven hundred. There is no conceivable chance that the party members could emulate the Nazis by fighting for control of the streets. The party therefore poses no immediate challenge to national order. If its leaders exacerbate feelings in local communities to any serious extent by racist or religious bigotry, they can surely be dealt with under local laws for inciting to riot. But the suggestion that the Federal government should dignify such a movement by prosecution under the Smith act seems to us unnecessary and dangerous.

As matters now stand, the United States has moved quite far enough away from the ideal of free political expression. To our mind, only a substantial threat to our free political institutions can possibly justify prosecution of a political group under the Smith act. This is true not only in the case of a group whose ideas and conduct are particularly distasteful, but especially in such a case. Accepted and popular ideas need no protection;

NEXT WEEK

RUSSELL KIRK, author of *A Program for Conservatives*, writes on the dissolution of liberalism.

"The liberal system attained popularity because it promised progress without the onerous duties exacted by tradition and religion. It is now in the process of dissolution because, founded on an imperfect and distorted myth, it has been unable to fulfill its promise, and because it no longer appeals in any degree to the higher imagination. It has been undone by social disillusion. Before long, no one will be able to shelter under the tattered fabric of liberalism. I see three possible successors to the liberal system: some iron discipline like that of Communism, founded upon a gross heresy from Christian principle; some Machiavellian scheme founded upon self-interest and creature-comforts; or a reinvigorated adherence to religious doctrines and traditional rights, which system we call, in politics, 'conservatism.' "

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unpopular and even hateful ideas put the American system to the test. Right-wing extremist groups should be exposed. But in the absence of clear and immediate danger to national welfare, the Smith act should not be invoked. Public opinion will deal with such groups more effectively than governmental action.

THE POPE'S ILLNESS

AT this writing the news from the Vatican on the health of Pope Pius continues to be good, and all Catholics rejoice in that fact. Reports that the Pope plans to broadcast special Christmas greetings to the world provide still another indication of the remarkable manner in which the Holy Father has pursued his strenuous duties in recent months, despite the seriousness of his illness.

Concern for the Pope's health has certainly not been confined to Catholics. The manner in which the newspapers and other news media have treated his illness gives convincing evidence of the extent to which Pius XII enjoys the respect of millions outside the Church. Word of the Pope's recent collapse sobered men all over the world, whether Catholic or not.

Typical of the spirit displayed during Pope Pius' illness was the action of the General Assembly of the National Council of Churches of Christ when the news came that his condition was rapidly deteriorating. At the suggestion of the president, the Reverend Eugene Carlson Blake, all joined in a minute of silent prayer for Pope Pius. Then the group passed a resolution embodying the Council's prayer and expressing sympathy with Roman Catholics "in their anxiety." Anxiety it was, and is, but surely one made easier by the knowledge that so many men of good will are joined in prayer for the widely loved Pope Pius XII.

THE REECE REPORT

THE report of the special Committee to Investigate Tax-Exempt Foundations has been made and, as was expected, it is an attack on the major Foundations as well as upon those newspapers which criticized the Committee during its hearings last year. Declaring that the public "should be made aware of the impact of Foundation influence on our accepted way of life," the report criticizes the Foundations for their "excessive support of the empirical method," for "a distinct tendency to favor political opinions of the left," and for promoting " 'internationalism' in a particular sense—a forum directed toward 'world government' and a derogation of American 'nationalism.' "

The week ending December 20 produced more than four hundred new subscriptions to The Commonweal. That brings the distance still to be traversed to reach the Thirtieth Anniversary goal down to 1,849 new subscriptions. We are extremely grateful to those readers who have made this progress possible and suggest to those who have not yet taken part in the campaign that they will find the coupon on the back cover of this issue a convenience for entering gift subscriptions.

The report calls for further investigation and possible revision of the laws governing the tax status of the Foundations. "The prohibition against the use of Foundation funds to support subversion . . . needs wholesale revision," the Republican majority states. "As the law stands it is only the support of Communism and Fascism which is prohibited . . . It is clear to us that all support of socialism, collectivism or any other form of society or government which is at variance with the basic principles of ours should be proscribed." Any Foundation which promotes such "un-American" ideas as it mentions should lose its tax-exempt status, the Committee believes.

So, here we have it: this report is surely one of the worst displays of Congressional ignorance and arrogance in recent years—and these years gave it a good deal of competition. It is not the fact that the Foundations were investigated which causes dismay. A good case for investigating their tax situation might be made, and another Committee, with another chairman than Representative B. Carroll Reece of Tennessee, might have carried through the investigation with intelligence and balance. But the fact that this Committee, in its hearings last year and now in its report, has set itself up as a definer of "good" Americanism is a cause for real concern.

What is "our accepted way of life"? What is "internationalism"? What does the Committee mean by "socialism"? An answer to these questions is never made clear, but judging from some of the "expert" testimony which the Committee heard, and from the general tenor of Mr. Reece's remarks before, during, and after the hearings, we might guess that "our accepted way of life" is something to the right of the National Association of Manufacturers, "internationalism" is support of the United Nations, and "socialism" is the bulk of the social legislation which has been enacted during

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the past two decades. Mr. Reece, we suspect, would restore us to the uncomplicated purity of, say, 1900, since his report suggests that the evolution of America's foreign and domestic policies in this century has been the result of some dark subversion by the intellectuals.

The minority report, signed by the two Democrats on the Committee, characterizes the Reece report, and the majority behavior during the hearings, as "barbaric" and a "stain" on the record of the House of Representatives. These are accurate descriptions. There is something terrifying about Congressmen attempting to play pontiff, naming and defining the "true" American faith and demanding that any Foundations which hope to receive Congressional favor subscribe to it. This is the ultimate un-Americanism, for flexibility and non-dogmatism are of Americanism's essence.

The image of a Committee laying down the proper ideological line, saying what are "good" and what are "bad" political thoughts, is profoundly hostile to our tradition. The Reece report is a warning of the danger of placing narrowly doctrinaire men in positions of Congressional power.

THE PERPETUAL PRIZE

CYPRUS is a Mediterranean island of some half a million people and less than four thousand square miles. It is rich in minerals and history. Copper, one of the island's exports from earliest times, takes its name from Cyprus' Greek title, Kypros. In recorded history, the island has belonged to the Phoenicians, the Assyrians, the Egyptians, the Persians, Alexander the Great, the Romans (it was a gift from Anthony to Cleopatra), the Arabs, Richard the Lion-Heart, Guy of Lusignan, the Venetians, the Turks, and Britain.

It has been one of the perpetual prizes of history. Now it wants self-determination, and self-determination means union (*Enosis*) with Greece. The people of the island are predominately Greek in culture; but Greece is six hundred miles away, Turkey is forty.

As a British Crown Colony, the island has been made the principal British Mediterranean military base; it has taken the military place of Suez.

Britain offered the Cypriotes a liberal constitution in 1947, but it was rejected in favor of *Enosis*. The sentiment for union with Greece has been maintained in the intervening years and the Communists have not overlooked this opportunity to alienate the Greeks from the Anglo-Saxon nations and from their Turkish allies, who, on this question, support Britain. The matter was brought before the UN General Assembly this fall and on December 15th the General Assembly voted that it would not discuss the status of the island. The United States voted with Britain and Turkey. The anti-American riots which followed on Cyprus and the Greek mainland have been making headlines in American newspapers.

Here is a case in which every Western group loses. The solid friendship of Greece, Britain, Turkey and the United States is undermined. The Greeks are determined that the British must get out; the Cyriotes are determined to have *Enosis* at any cost; the British, fed up with evacuations, are determined to stick and have given orders that police and troops may fire on rioters if necessary. The British public thus awoke in the middle of the excitement to make the disturbing discovery that British troops were authorized to fire on other British subjects, which the Cypriotes are. Only the Soviet Union, a near neighbor to Cyprus, anxious to undermine Western unity, is certain to gain.

Britain is said to be going to offer Cyprus another new constitution. But this one—to avoid a repetition of the British Guiana fiasco—will be less liberal than that of 1947. Talk in the United Kingdom also turns around the idea of giving Cyprus a status like that which Puerto Rico holds in relation to the United States. The catch in the analogy is that the Puerto Ricans freely chose their unique status and voted against the complete independence which the United States Government offered them. The Cypriotes will take such a constitution only if it is jammed down their throats; what they want is to be Greek. It is hard to believe that, sooner or later, they are not going to be Greek.

ABBÉ ERNEST DIMNET

THE Abbé Dimnet has died, and we can think of no one to replace him. He was an almost classic type of the *salon abbé*—cultivated, witty, sophisticated, tolerant, charitable, a Christian humanist in the best sense of the term.

Ernest Dimnet was famous in this country as a writer and a lecturer. His *The Art of Thinking* was a best-seller for many years. But we remember him best for *My Old World* and *My New World*, two books which should have an enduring life as the expression of a quiet and cultivated, essentially skeptical but always reverent mind.

The Abbé Dimnet contributed to this magazine for twenty-seven years. His first article was published in 1924, his last in 1951. He was, therefore, an old and admired friend. May he rest in peace.

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Italian War of Words

A REPORT ON THE TECHNIQUES USED BY BOTH COMMUNISTS AND ANTI-COMMUNISTS TO WIN THE LOYALTIES OF THE ITALIAN PEOPLE

GUNNAR D. KUMLIEN

WHO is the warmongering General Bum? Did his ideas about the use of atomic energy have anything to do with his imprisonment in the iron cage? What happened to Chiodino, his fierce enemy, the Communist robot with the golden heart?

Communist children in Italy will readily tell you about these popular figures, as familiar to them as Hopalong Cassidy and Peter Pan to American children. They are the principals in the Communist comic, *Il Pioniere,* a favorite of Communist children.

At what age do you have to explain sex to your children and how should you do it? Which is more important in a child, education or heredity? Communist parents in Italy will give you quick and, very often, surprising answers to these questions, quoting again and again an authority probably completely unknown to you, Soviet Professor Anton S. Makarenko, the great pundit of pedagogy throughout the Communist world. Since the war many children have been born in Italy to Communist parents. Practically all of the parents are converts to Communism, but the children are "born Communists," and they are being educated, almost from the cradle onwards, as Communists, with Communist methods.

Many of the Communist youth in Italy are organized in the National Italian Association of Pioneers (the Associazione Nazionale Pionieri d'Italia). This organization has approximately 147,000 members—admittedly not very many in comparison to the roughly two million members of the Party and the even greater number of Communist sympathizers. But the individual ANPI groups run Sunday schools, football teams, and theater groups, and their summer camps are so well-organized that many non-Communist families send their children to them.

These groups, their newspapers, and the educational guidance given to Communist parents by the Party make a most interesting study.

The Communist comic, *Il Pioniere,* contains stories which, on the surface, are wholly innocent. The paper must compete with the technically superior American comics, of the Walt Disney variety, which sell much better even among Communist children. They have another handicap, too, in the opposition of the clergy and Catholic organizations. As Italian Communists have often proved to be as stubbornly attached to their Church as to the Party, they often will give up *Il Pioniere* as a concession to the parish priest. But in spite of the handicaps, the paper reaches a circulation of slightly less than seventy thousand copies a week.

The editors say that they want to teach the children to have confidence in themselves and their own powers, independent of any supernatural aid or intervention. (God, however, is not completely banished from the magazine, but is represented as marching alongside "the people.") The heroes of the paper are usually forceful young characters who fight corrupt tyrants. Many are taken from Italian history. Spartacus and Garabaldi, for instance, are represented as the forerunners of contemporary Communist heroes. Others are Red Army soldiers and officers, kind, noble, fatherly, brave, and very handsome. In strips for the smallest children, there are nursery rhymes about a figure who is persecuted by rich, naughty enemies, but always manages to defeat them and then generously to pardon them. The most popular character is Chiodino, a steel robot with a golden heart, who competes with fat, warmongering capitalist, General Bum.

IF one looks more closely at Garibaldi and Spartacus as they are presented in *Il Pioniere,* they appear quite different from the traditional picture we have of them. It is "revised" history, based on the class struggle, determined exclusively by economic factors.

Some ANPI organizations have recently been accused of teaching the children immorality and blasphemy in order to turn them away from the Church. It appears, however, that only in rare cases has this actually happened. Such is by no means the spirit of the Pioneers.

The official Communist attitude towards sex is a puritanical one. Moral slackness is severely frowned

Mr. Kumlien is Rome correspondent for the *Stockholms-Tidningen* and The Commonweal.

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upon. The Communists have not rediscovered ethical principles; they have discovered the social usefulness of the natural law. Their utilitarian puritanism might be summarized thus: If young people are left to themselves they waste time on sex which might better be employed in stakhanovism and five-year plans; strong families produce the best soldiers and citizens, therefore solid families with many children ought to be encouraged.

To assess the Communist attitude on sex, one must, of course, keep in mind that our Western civilization, in comparison with any other civilization of the day, is sex-conscious to the point of being almost erotomanic —one more reason to term our age the post-Christian or ex-Christian age, as Toynbee does.

What Soviet Professor Makarenko says about the delicate question of the sexual instruction of children is of special interest. Faithful to the golden rule of wasting as little time on sex as possible, he cites the "social moral": No sexual relations outside the family can be tolerated; the sexual enlightenment of children must not be started too early; if the children are curious and put questions, the questions should be dismissed with a smile or a joke. His whole advice on the problem would have been proper in the England of Queen Victoria.

Generally speaking, the chief difference between Communist pedagogy and current educational trends in the West is the disproportionate emphasis placed by the Communists on environment and education. According to their view, all deficiencies can be cured through proper education. Makarenko goes so far as to say that if the education of a child is a failure, it is, in ninety-nine out of a hundred cases, a fault of the teacher.

THE demagogic aspect of all this is obvious. But the Communists have succeeded in changing the Russian people beyond recognition during the past thirty-five years. What is going on in Italy is the same bold transformation of human material, first and foremost the 147,000 little Pioneers, and, to a lesser degree, the nearly two million Party members, the more than twice that number of Communist trade unionists, and the nearly ten million Italians who vote the Communist ticket or sympathize with the Party.

Millions of dollars have been spent in Italy on anti-Communist propaganda. The Communists' own propaganda methods have been studied and imitated. Specialized Catholic organization like the Comitati Civici—the civic committees—have worked out technically excellent slogans and posters. Still the results have been discouragingly poor. The failure is one which has tormented the men behind the anti-Communist propaganda throughout these last years and so far no wholly satisfactory explanation has been given. The fact is that Italian anti-Communist propaganda, in its present form, simply does not work. Its arguments have no serious influence on elections, which consistently show increasing Communist strength.

Recently a new form of propaganda has been tried: scandal. Well-known representatives of the Communist Party, who attack bourgeois Italy for its alleged corruption, have had the corruption of their own private lives exposed to the public. The result has been disastrous. The Communists were quick to disavow their exposed comrades and turn against them if necessary, while continuing their attacks against bourgeois corruption. At the same time, the Fascists have profited from the mutual mud-throwing by citing it to excuse the Fascist corruption which was unveiled after the fall of Mussolini. "This is the so-called democratic Italy," they say, "which is supposed to be better than we were!"

Anti-Communist propaganda seems to be unable to penetrate to the people whom it is intended to reach. These primarily are people who are neither Communist nor anti-Communist but live in close contact with Communists and thus run the risk of becoming Communists themselves. (Italian Party members themselves are usually too well-indoctrinated to be affected by anti-Communist propaganda.) Why are these people—mostly workers and peasants, but including intellectuals and white-collar workers—largely immune to anti-Communist propaganda?

ONE reason is that anti-Communist propaganda frequently is stupid. It has truthfully been said that one of the reasons for the strength of Communism is the stupidity of anti-Communism. Anti-Communist propaganda can be, at the same time, technically good and undeniably stupid, if considered in terms of the people to whom it is addressed. It is depressing to have to listen to the superficialities which some anti-Communists in responsible positions consider to be fundamental truths about Communism and which actually are nothing more than ready-made bourgeois

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prejudice. When these clichés are worked out in eye-catching posters and slogans, they may enormously please anti-Communists, but serve only to wound the people to whom they are directed and to push them towards Communism.

If we exclude that kind of propaganda, there remains a substantial kind, well-designed and easily understood, built solidly on facts, particularly on the facts of life in nations behind the iron curtain. Why is it that this propaganda doesn't work?

When one chats with the people concerned, these people who live in daily contact with the Communists, they may give you the answer. Their daily experience with Communists is a most favorable one; it is not merely occasional contact but the experience of years of Communist associations.

It started during the war when, after Mussolini's fall, the Germans changed almost overnight from disciplined allies to ruthless occupiers. The Communists proved to be among the toughest resistance fighters and had the greatest number of fallen. After the war it was in great part due to them and to the violent agitation of their trade unions that the working class obtained some substantial improvement in their living standards. Indeed, it seemed as if the only way to obtain improvements and raise the standard of living was to vote Communist; otherwise "the rich" only promised and never fulfilled their promises. Furthermore, the Communists, as individuals, make greater financial sacrifices for their cause and dedicate more time to it. Their neighbors will tell you that they often are exemplary fathers or mothers, and many of them are such nice idealists whom everybody admires. . . .

So the people tell you. And these people are not crypto-Communists or ordinary fellow-travelers. They are people who happen to live on the same landing with a Communist family, or work next to a Communist at their office, or have Communist acquaintances who are fans of the same football team. They have not been able to notice any difference between the Communist Party and any other political party. For them the Communist Party is as democratic, or as good, or as bad, as the Liberal party, or the Christian Democratic party—only maybe just a bit more idealistic and efficient.

When a man in this situation meets propaganda which says that Communists are dangerous subversives, menacing private property, the family, freedom, democracy, the most elementary human decency, he simply will not believe it, for it contradicts his own experience. He will go further, and think that all these charges must be political lies spread by people who fear the loss of their social and economic privileges.

If an anti-Communist insists on drawing attention to what has actually happened in the countries where Communism is in power, the listener will react as if he thought all that rather far-fetched and theoretical; he asks you to put your finger on one single example of such atrocities among the Communists he knows so well. He argues that if what is said about Communism in Russia and China is true, it ought also to be true of the Communists in Italy. And if he should take seriously what you say about the iron curtain countries, his inevitable conclusion will be that Italian Communists are different. And this is the same reaction that you invariably get from people in close contact with Communists: Arab Communists, French Communists, Persian Communists, Italian Communists—local Communists always are "different."

THIS brings us to the kernel of the question. Are these local Communists calumniated? Are they in reality most democratic gentlemen? This is the extraordinary optical illusion which makes even the best anti-Communist propaganda practically powerless in Western Europe, and thus enables Communism to progress as it does in the Western world.

Many have noted the strange and monstrous similarities between Communism and Christianity. Toynbee sees in Communism a "Christian heresy." And there is something akin to Christianity in the three-fold division of the Communist movement. The first division is "Communism suffering": where Communism is illegal and persecuted, as in Spain. The second is "Communism militant": where Communism is openly competing with other parties, as in Italy and other democratic countries. The third is "Communism triumphant": where Communism has state power, as in Eastern Europe.

This division of Communism is most helpful in understanding the appeal of the movement. It shows the "suffering Communists" as martyrs, able to move the sympathies of decent people; the "militant Communists" as democratic people with many idealists among them. And the "triumphant Communists"—here the miraculous transformation occurs, for history has proven that the moment Communism is safely in power it changes; it becomes the most scientific and

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bureaucratic terror the world has ever known. The "suffering" and "militant" Communists are the same as the "triumphant" Communists, and yet they are completely different. That is what people who live in pleasant daily contact with "suffering" or "militant" Communists fail to realize. And when they learn, it is too late.

"Suffering" or "militant" Communist individuals and even organizations may be thoroughly democratic in the Western sense of the word. Thus attempts to suppress such Communist organizations nearly always have the unpleasant aspect of something actually undemocratic; it usually is difficult to find the legal evidence necessary to justify suppression. Here again, just as in propaganda activities, justice is put in the difficult position of proving the culpability of "militant Communism" by citing what "triumphant Communism" has done in distant countries. It always seems a bit strained, and it is easy for the Communists to win a moral victory even if they are declared illegal.

Other examples of this transformation are indicated in the political jokes of our times. The French used to say that one Englishman was a crank, two Englishmen were two cranks, and three Englishmen were a great nation. During the Fascist régime in Italy, it was said that when two Italians met they bitterly criticized Fascism; when three Italians met, they avoided talking about it; when four met, they praised Fascism; and when five Italians met, they gathered under Mussolini's balcony and shouted: *Duce, Duce you are our guide and destiny!* Single "militant Communists," single "militant Communist" organizations, may be perfectly democratic; but when they become numerous and strong enough, they always have transformed themselves into the very negation of democracy.

Thus the fruitless dialogue between anti-Communist propaganda and the people to whom it is directed goes on. "Be careful! If you help the Communists they will rob you of democracy!" And the people to whom it is directed, the people who live in daily contact with Communism, reply: "We don't believe your wild stories. We believe our own experience with our friends and neighbors. We believe that the Communists are more democratic than you are!"

That is the hidden snag of anti-Communist propaganda, and that is the tragedy.

A NOTE ON GRAHAM GREENE'S PLAY

Life in the Living Room

JOHN STANLEY

IT'S a pity "The Living Room" closed after such a short run in New York. There are many instructive things in it, and this is an age of not inconsiderable ignorance. Graham Greene's play enjoyed success in the West End, but it was not able to survive more than twenty-one performances on Broadway. There was for a time some talk of its becoming "controversial," after the manner of Mr. Greene's novel, *The Heart of the Matter,* which had everyone discussing the whereabouts of Major Scobie's soul. But John Chapman of the *Daily News,* that accurate meter of the New York temper, decided it was not worth it and theater-goers yawned with him. Presumably they've all gone round to buy tickets for "The Boy Friend," a different species of West End theater. Mr. Greene is a writer of sufficient eminence, however, to justify the consideration of some notes on his flop.

The living room is a Catholic world Mr. Greene and others of us have experienced, and can show scars to prove it. The living room is the only room left in a big house; most of the other rooms have been shut and locked, one by one, when someone died there, and the world is so full of death that the family is kept moving to avoid their shades. There are so many dead: liberals and Communists and apostates and heretics and those who practice birth control (contraceptive, that is) and homosexuals and Jews and, well, all the dead. These people must be cut off from recognition as existing in the real, living world. Contact with them might cause one to become dead, too.

The living room is a world of nice people, rather gray and fruitless, but nice. Ideally they are either unmarried or clerics, and only rude intrusions from below vulgarize the situation. All are related, of the same clan. No breath of scandal ever froths the placid atmosphere, nor poverty, nor, indeed, great luxury; *virtus in medio stat.*

The living room is a world of "devotions" and

Mr. Stanley is associated with the Catholic Worker movement in New York City.

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touched-up photographs of Saint Therese and the diocesan weekly, full of pictures and news of anniversaries and deaths and the blessing of buildings and movie proscription lists and anti-Communist editorials. The living room is a fortress from which anathemas can be hurled and from which the enemy can be spotted from a long, long way off.

The living room is a place of stern propriety. At one end of the room is a door leading to a landing and stairwell and the world below; at the other end a door leading into the w.c. When one of the maiden aunts, Aunt Therese—in one of the few laugh-producing bits of business in a pretty grim play—has to "attend to the needs of nature," as delicate persons have put it, she enters and passes through the living room and into the bathroom without either hearing or seeing or speaking to anyone. In a little while she emerges and again crosses the room in the same manner and goes out the other door, and then immediately re-enters. One simply does not take cognizance of such activities; they are out of time and place, a sort of demi-eternity.

The living room is a world of fear and rigidity. There is great concentration there on sin, especially the ones listed in the manuals of piety and devotion. And above all the ones against the Sixth and Ninth Commandments. Watch and ward; be prudent; be not presumptuous; do not give scandal; the Church is a private club and no one must mar its reputation. Stern measures must be taken to preserve the impeccability of the living room. (I once had a professor who saw fit to spend an entire class period of a one-semester course in Hispanic-American history to prove—with the aid of a great pile of books and considerable enthusiasm—that the Church has the right to inflict the death penalty.) Past glories and "rights" and sin, these are the great things to contemplate in the living room.

THOMAS Merton has spoken about the importance of plasticity, stressing the fact that nothing should be allowed to obscure the tremendous fact of God's existence and His love for us. And that not even sin, mortal sin, should lead us to forget the ocean of love which is God.

This is not to say, of course, that one should ever minimize sin's enormity, but it is to say that the proper focus of a person's spirituality should be on God, not on sin. To contemplate sin is to contemplate death and sterility; to contemplate God is to contemplate fertility and love and the only framework in which love can become operative: liberty. But in the living room they say with a tight-lipped smile, "But we must remember always, mustn't we, the difference between liberty and license?"

Part of the duty of those who try to think a little about things and talk out about them is to keep turning the medal over and over and over. And to see the other side of the medal is to see that the inhabitants of the living room suffer bitterly from their own special maladies, even though these maladies cause suffering in others. They have their dark nights, even though Greene's Father Browne does not consider himself sufficiently advanced in the spiritual life to be undergoing the spiritual purification endured and described by Saint John of the Cross—whose poetry he reads to his sister, Therese. There is a woundedness, and a certain humility about him that cannot help but enkindle sympathy. These people should be liberated, too; they want to break through.

Recently a reviewer praised Miss Barbara Ward as one who is attempting ". . . to rescue Christianity from the hands of the pious." Mr. Greene is another. In a world trembling and frigid from an absence of the knowledge of God, even repelled by the notion of God—because of the caricature of Him that has been proliferated—in this world, on the street, in sight of the watchful, critical eyes of the inhabitants of the living room, he is attempting to talk about God. He is trying to talk about Him in an acceptable vocabulary and accent. A thing is known in the knower according to the manner of the knower . . . . and what Mr. Greene knows about God is built around concepts such as pity and mercy and love and infinite understanding. With Christmas fresh in mind, one asks, Is God not like this? God knows Himself as He Is and He knows the fact of the flesh and its glory and its capacity for suffering.

Due to no small extent to the mentality and actions of the inhabitants of the living room, the people on the street below see the flesh as something either for suffering and discomfort (which they try to avoid) *or* a means of pleasure (which they seek to exploit); they disconnect the two. In the living room the flesh is seen chiefly as an occasion for sin. They give their assent to the dogmas of the Incarnation and the Assumption, but they do not explore the implications that are the children of these dogmas.

Father Browne reads a poem written by Saint John of the Cross about the ecstasy of the Dark Night, and this poem was written at a time when the Saint was enduring sufferings of the flesh and spirit to a degree most men are not great enough to endure, and Saint John was happy. And this is to say that suffering and happiness and flesh and spirit are not arranged dichotomously but in unity. And God is united to us during this suffering-happiness. Our participation is limited for we are little children, and, as Mr. Greene has suggested earlier this year from Indochina, the Cross is so overwhelming that it is perhaps fitting that children should play and sing in the shadow of it.

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FROM WASHINGTON

The Censure of Senator McCarthy

NOTHING that enters the labyrinthine channels of the United States Senate ever seems to emerge in clear and unambiguous terms. The processes of compromise, the transfiguring hand of politics, inevitably frustrate the logician's demand for consistency and thwart the moralist's expectation of courageous judgment.

And so it might have appeared even with the clearest, most frontal demand for the Senate's moral judgment: the case of Senator McCarthy. Even here the tortured processes of the "world's greatest deliberative body"—an expression tossed around with abandon from all sides of the chamber-turned-arena—spewed forth a mangled mass of language called "condemnation." As might have been anticipated, few were really pleased with the results—or remains, if you will.

Yet, much must be said in explanation of the Senate's proclivity for equivocation, especially in dealing with the difficult McCarthy. For despite the dropping of any reference to the Wisconsin Senator's abusive treatment of General Ralph Zwicker, the most surprising thing about the whole course of Senator Flanders' censure resolution was the simple fact that there was any censure at all. At every step of the way, cynical voices chorused their predictions: "Nothing will ever come of this."

There were ample grounds for this pessimism. From the beginning, it was clear that, as against inaction, there were no political rewards to be had for taking a stand either for or against McCarthy. This man had become too deeply imbedded in a large section of the national consciousness, however falsely, as the symbol of anti-Communism. Within the Senate itself a strong minority, at least, was prepared to fight any move toward censure with all claws unsheathed. The religious issue, too, had entered this dispute with all its wide-ranging political implications. Most important, however, was the Senate's traditional reluctance to take punitive action against one of its members. Something more fundamental than the much-discussed "club" system underlay this reluctance: the basic dependence, under Senate rules, on *laissez-faire* for conducting its business in orderly fashion. For the Senate is a prime target for obstructionism of any kind, with so much of its work done on a "unanimous consent" basis. A handful of Senators—even one, in fact—can so disrupt and prolong Senate operations as to weaken severely that body's effectiveness.

In view of such compelling considerations, the Senate's action in censuring Senator McCarthy must be considered astonishing. Why, then, was such unlikely action taken?

TWO reasons sum up, or dominate, all others. Once the censure resolution reached the Senate floor for consideration McCarthy could no longer be ignored by his colleagues. Nor could McCarthy himself ignore his own involvement as an issue; so, characteristically, he and his supporters reacted with all the venom, distortion, and vicious counter-charge which has become their style. But now the forum was the Senate—not the committee room or the public platform; and their targets were their peers, not defenseless witnesses. McCarthy was stuck in the Senate's craw, and he wouldn't keep still.

At this point, an analogy suggests itself from the Rome of Cicero and Catiline—or, rather, is suggested by the man who should have lived to write the story of Senator McCarthy. William Bolitho, in his classic study of adventure, *Twelve Against the Gods,* captured the essence of McCarthy, along with Catiline and such other disparate adventurers as Alexander the Great, Casanova and Napoleon, in this paragraph:

> Their faults are not mud spots, but structural outcroppings, of an indivisible piece with their personality. But there is a special reason for the inveterate illegality, or if you prefer, wickedness, of your true adventurer, which is inherent in the concept of Adventure itself. Adventure is the irreconcilable enemy of law; the adventurer must be unsocial, if not in the deepest sense antisocial, because he is essentially a free individualist.

The analogy is illuminating. Catiline, like McCarthy, had reached the summit of his power by exploiting the fears, the insecurity, the confusion and the divisive factors present in a Rome which sat astride the world. Catiline's Great Idea was the sack of Rome, the ruthless destruction of her institutions, the subversion of orderly processes, the rule of the mob—for, Bolitho believed, no other reason than the sheer love of destruction, the lust for power, the "simple delight of stirring up great crowds."

But exposure, for Catiline as for McCarthy, proved his undoing. Cicero, one of the few to see the evil below the surface of apparently simple political disturbance, moved cautiously; as Consul, he gathered his facts, and at the height of Catiline's activity and in the midst of mounting popular confusion, pierced the darkness of Catiline's plot with a series of three brilliant speeches. As the Roman Senate saw the magnitude

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of this evil in the pitiless exposure of Catiline, they turned on him. Catiline, Bolitho relates, tried to defend himself, but "in the midst of it, screaming threats back which could not properly be heard, he left the assembly."

Thus, in essence, has McCarthy been unveiled. Not by a single Cicero, but by several, including, ironically, himself and his cohorts. By their own performance, incited by the charges of Senators Flanders, Fulbright, Cooper and Morse, they displayed what most of their colleagues had hitherto refused to recognize. And so, McCarthy, too, has been condemned.

IN neither case, however, was the process of exposure and condemnation quite so simple as this analogy might indicate. Certainly not the McCarthy story. Its bare bones are familiar: the Senator's experimental immersion into the stormy waters of anti-Communism in 1950 with his sweeping charges against the State Department; his subsequent maneuverings with the Tydings Committee, and his relentless prosecution of the Truman-Acheson régime on the Senate floor, in the public press, and from platform to microphone to television camera across the nation; his inheritance of the Senate Investigating Subcommittee chairmanship and the consequent havoc wreaked on the Voice of America, the U. S. Information Service, Fort Monmouth, and assorted areas of the Army and State Departments; his incursions into the area of Executive responsibilities via the Greek shipowners and the Mutual Security Administration; and the whole continuous stream of vilification, intimidation, threat, innuendo, denunciation: of witnesses, the press, responsible government officials, outstanding public men, and his fellow Senators. This was the pattern woven by McCarthy, and it was on the basis of the whole garment, rather than the individual swatches referred to the Watkins committee, that censure was proposed, supported and, by many, voted.

But this sketch does not tell the whole story. Only in the people, their moves and counter-moves, does it emerge. And of first importance here must be Senator Ralph Flanders, from whose very active conscience an awareness of an obligation grew into the determination required to carry it through. Flanders, it should be emphasized, was no "front man" for a "Get McCarthy" movement. Though, certainly, he was encouraged. A note from the President, passed along indirectly through Sherman Adams; the quiet assurance of support, over lunch, from the Attorney General; and the impressive telegraphic appeal to all Senators by a group of outstanding businessmen, industrialists, educators, publishers and other leaders headed by Paul Hoffman—all helped. But it was Ralph Flanders, the unlikely old man from Vermont, who forced his frightened colleagues to face up to their task.

The reluctant confrontation quickly resolved itself into a series of demands for "judicial proceedings," the bills of particulars and other procedural devices designed to give the accused "his day in court"—even though, as Senator Cooper pointed out, McCarthy had neither denied the allegations nor asked for hearings. In spite of the convincing arguments presented by Cooper, Fulbright, and Monroney, that justice would be done through the procedure of a full floor debate, the combination of Morse, speaking as a firm advocate of censure, McClellan, acting as a spokesman for a large bloc of Southern Democrats, and Cordon, as a conservative Republican, prevailed by a wide margin in their demand that the matter be referred to a select committee.

Before the Senate disposed of this business, McCarthy had demonstrated anew the nature of his defense. Bull-like, with an almost overpowering physical presence, McCarthy attacked—in a rare kind of direct and personal way that brought astonished gasps from the packed galleries—demanding of each of the Senators daring to speak against him on the floor that they appear before the committee under oath, and "either indict themselves for perjury, or prove what consummate liars they are."

Reference of the Flanders resolution to the Select Committee marked the turning point; it was at once the great hope and the great danger. The action acknowledged, implicitly, that the McCarthy forces could not defeat the resolution by tabling it (though McCarthy had indicated he would so move), that their only hope was time and an intimidated committee. For the Senate had made unmistakably clear that the Select Committee was wrapped in its own mantle and that it bore the confidence and esteem of the Senate itself. This was a two-edged sword, and would give compelling authority to whatever findings were reported to the Senate.

As a result of reference, therefore, the censure resolution was kept alive; moreover, it forced McCarthy to continue his fight within the confines of Senate procedures, an arena much too restricted for his talents. Again, the knife cuts both ways—for reference was a legalistic move, with all the reverence for precedents, standards, rules and regulations implicit in such an approach. And these were conspicuously absent in the allegations against McCarthy, for his was no single incident shocking the Senate into action, but a whole pattern of conduct reflecting on the integrity of the institution whose powers he so abused. This was hardly subject to adequate consideration on the basis of individual specifications, none of which, standing alone, would have called down the Senate's wrath on McCarthy. And this became the

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basis of McCarthy's defense as employed by his able counsel, Edward Williams. The Committee, itself—six conservative, unpretentious gentlemen, several with legal backgrounds—might well have been expected to accept a legalistic defense, with easy escape.

But under the guidance of Chairman Watkins these men were not looking for escape. And, while refusing to permit McCarthy to put them on the defensive, they found the facts, organized them masterfully so that the incidents of the McCarthy record served to symbolize rather than obscure his over-all pattern of conduct as a Senator. Giving him the benefit of every doubt, they nevertheless recommended censure on two of five counts, and severely chastised him on the remaining three.

THE strength, the fairness and the compelling clarity of the Watkins Committee report climaxed the whole affair, by exposing the details of McCarthy's public life to the forced scrutiny of his fellows and the world. With the special session, McCarthy was confronted with new accusers; in effect, the Senate itself, in the persons of six of its most respected members. Everything else—however fascinating and dramatic—was anti-climactic in the face of certain censure. The endless repetition, the violence of McCarthy, Welker and Jenner, the maneuverings of Bridges, Dirksen and Knowland—only stiffened the spine of the rigid, icy, white-haired Senator from Utah who, as he absorbed the punishment of his neighbor from Wisconsin, surely and securely nurtured the conscience of the Senate. As debate mounted to new heights of acrimony, Watkins, Ervin, Stennis, Fulbright, Bennett and others functioned as a giant mirror, reflecting and illumining the nature of the McCarthy defense, and so confirming their colleagues in their resolve.

As a consequence, the Wisconsin Senator was thoroughly condemned by his colleagues. Social responsibility asserted itself to rebuke the destructive Adventurer. What this meant to McCarthy and his supporters may have been revealed in the ominous performance of "Wild Bill" Jenner, immediately following the final censure vote. As Senator Bridges wryly inquired of the Vice President whether the word "censure" appeared in the resolution as just passed, Jenner roared into hysterical laughter, from his seat at the rear of the chamber. As all eyes in the jammed room were magnetized by this distraught figure, Jenner leaped to his feet, strode into the aisle with fists clinched and arms waving, to deliver one of the most snarling excoriations of Democrats and Republicans alike ever witnessed in the U. S. Senate.

It was the cry of the lunatic fringe as it cut itself adrift.

FRANCIS J. KEENAN.

THE STAGE

THE BAD SEED

THE late William March is enjoying, with Mr. Maxwell Anderson's adaptation of his last novel, an ironic celebrity denied him in life by a negligent public. "The Bad Seed" (*at the 46th Street Theater*) most worthily and responsibly translates a work of the imagination from one convention to a second; it neither supersedes the novel nor violates it—what has been achieved, rather, is a careful, fastidious visual transcription. Occasionally a screw is turned for dramatic emphasis, incidental background altered, a character invented to illumine the past, but in the main Mr. Anderson has served his mentor with a chaste and devoted anonymity. If, indeed, adaptation from one medium to another is at all defensible (and the curious technical incompetence of the play's first act might possibly suggest that it is not) then Mr. Anderson must surely command our respect and undiluted admiration.

Mr. March's chronicle of the exquisitely monstrous Rhoda Penmark is a symmetrically perfect, quite obvious parable of the deceits of appearance and reality. Visibly, Rhoda ravishes the tender sensibilities of her elders: a shallow dimple flickers winningly in her cheek; her cool, gray eyes open with morning-freshness on the wide world; her quaint and polished propriety summons up a lost age of innocence. Yet behind the dimple, the unclouded gaze, the studied curtsey, bleakly stretches an airless moral abyss, a void in which the roots of conscience wither horribly. For with the warmth and heat of childhood still fresh on her, Rhoda may yet claim an accomplished criminal past, an uncompromising audacity of vicious intention: the old woman "shoved a little" to her death at the bottom of a stairwell; a child at a school picnic calmly beaten with her cleated shoes until he fell back and drowned among the wharf pilings; the moronic janitor—a venomous tease—who one day, from an afternoon nap, wakes in a coat of flame, and who, watching Rhoda from his locked and fiery cell, "knew then, in those dreadful moments before death, precisely what had happened to him."

To Mr. March, Rhoda is the fruit of a bad seed, passed by an equally monstrous ancestor through the uncorrupted body of the mother, to blossom at last in this mild and charming flesh. Acquisitiveness and animal fear are her only spontaneous impulses: she is one of the derelicts of civilization: it is quite as if she had been morally frozen in ice, to be released after thousands of years with all those brutal instincts still intact. The novel chronicles this traveling incubus of greed and anarchy in its collision with the green,

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daylight world—the mother's desperate strategies of reconciliation, and her final destruction. Mr. March's particular triumph was the narrative cunning with which he recorded the colorless moral nullity slowly settling over Rhoda and her mother like a glass bell: one had a sense of moving from the noisy, manageable, transient periphery of a hurricane to its deadly center, where a dreadful quiet rules, and we are certain only of *this* act, *this* moment—for beyond the perimeter of our vision lies chaos.

Mr. Anderson, his director and cast do not quite evoke that exquisite shudder: the play's first act is littered with irrelevant psychological debris, Freudian patter to which one may perhaps concede amusement, but also an impenetrably undramatic thickness. Mr. Anderson's further lumpish explorations of heredity and the criminal climate again expose the American playwright in his classically uneasy relation to ideas; here the clinic and the couch loom, the jaunty psychiatrist tweedily points his pipe, and in the distance subway posters proclaim their truth: "Noted medical authorities agree. . . ."

Miss Nancy Kelly steadily draws the evening back from these vulnerable shores. After an uncertain beginning, her performance boldly takes the full tide of panicked knowledge and outraged conscience: there is gathering power here, and a constant, generous, skilful deployment of emotional energy—nothing is withheld. Only Uta Hagen could, I think, equal Miss Kelly's ability to sustain with the resources of her body and spirit a large graph of feeling. And what wisdom, what craft there is in the gesture of angry contempt with which she confronts Rhoda with the coveted medallion, or the drained horror in the set of her shoulders as she walks away from the thing which is her daughter: these images concentrate an experience. The child, Patty McCormack, makes a remarkable tour de force of Rhoda— not so difficult as it would seem, I suspect, but full still of a hard and resilient malice. Eileen Heckart's first scene sharply draws a genuine pathos—her second seemed to me redundant and disagreeably lit with a coarse humor; while Evelyn Varden punctuates and vivifies her role with an entirely accustomed professional distinction. The balance of the cast indifferently maintain a level of the barest competence.

What troubles me still about "The Bad Seed"—play and novel—is a curious, lingering sense that I have been gulled, a restive dissatisfaction at what one English critic of the book has described as a burking of the moral issue. Heredity? Environment? One asks of "The Bad Seed" questions a *complete* novel or play would not provoke. Possibly the deeper concerns of the theme are a little too factitious to dominate us, or perhaps Rhoda's actions impinge too closely on the world of human, moral values to leave us quite comfortable with the work either as divertissement or serious statement. For Rhoda is a moral cipher—the typhoid in the drinking glass, the scorpion in the darkened drawer—and our only response to her is a heightened animal terror, the impulse to run to cover. But in the mother's ruin we are all implicated, for here, however tenuously, Mr. March has touched what Henry James called "the imagination of disaster." Lacking a final wisdom, too capable of a conventional guile, he has yet explored the open wound of violence in our time, and for that reason the prophet should not be without honor in his own country.

RICHARD HAYES.

THE SCREEN

BRISKET OF BLOWFISH BASTED IN BARNACLES

WE are fortunate that it was a producer with Walt Disney's high standards who decided to film "20,000 Leagues under the Sea." It is an excellent production done with a glow of adventure and imagination. It might be a little hard for today's hep youngsters, who take the A-bomb for granted, to realize what a wonder Captain Nemo's invention really was back in submarine-less 1868, but if parents remind their children what innocents their nineteenth-century forebears were, the kids will soon get into the spirit of the period and the story. The film itself tries to do as much—but without too much success in the opening scenes. However, once the professor (Paul Lukas) and his assistant (Peter Lorre) and harpooner Ned Land (Kirk Douglas) get aboard a U.S. armed frigate to track down the mysterious monster that has been destroying ships in the Pacific, the adventure gets going in grand style.

Scriptwriter Earl Felton had no easy time converting Jules Verne's famous book into a screenplay; he modernized the dialogue at times to fit the situation and cast (like the crack comparing Lorre's eyes to soft-boiled eggs) but he was remarkably faithful to Verne in spirit. Because of this engrossing story and Richard Fleischer's skillful direction, the viewer is engrossed in the adventures of the professor and his assistant and Ned from the very moment they climb out of the Pacific and onto the *Nautilus*—and discover it is not a living monster. The real monster, of course, is Captain Nemo (played to the silky hilt by James Mason) who hates mankind and invented this diabolic scheme to enjoy peace in the depths of the ocean while avenging himself on the world. Kirk Douglas' lusty performance as Ned is one of the picture's high points and in perfect contrast to Nemo's quiet

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though spectacular evil designs and the professor's refined determination to use science for good (and to convert Nemo). Ned is the loud, happy extrovert and his friendship with the professor's assistant (Lorre in a likable role for a change) provides much of the picture's fun.

Disney's production in CinemaScope and Technicolor does full justice to the awesome sights in the watery depths—and, as a matter of fact, to the mysteries of the *Nautilus*' engine rooms and machinery, not to speak of Nemo's private quarters which are elaborately furnished in Victorian style. Although Verne's story was a forerunner of today's science fiction, let no one think this stunning movie is just escapist stuff. It is decorated with as many morals as it is with fishes and corals and giant squids; and the morals run the gamut from comments on the dignity of man to discussions on responsibilities and hopes for the future.

MOVIEGOERS with more sophisticated tastes are certain to enjoy "Gate of Hell," a Japanese film of almost incredible beauty. While I found "Roshomon" and "Ugetsu" more stimulating as dramas, "Gate of Hell" surpasses them visually because it is in color and uses color in a way that would make many a Hollywood producer envious. The first part of its story concerns a revolution in Japan some eight hundred years ago, and although the mechanics of the revolution and the problem of figuring out which side is which are almost impossible to follow, the war and the intrigues involved are portrayed in a manner seldom seen on our screens. The whole first section of the movie is like Japanese paintings come to life. Director Teinosuke Kinugasa in telling the story of this revolution does more with a few simple scenes showing a sword going through a drapery than does many another director in showing a whole battle scene.

The main story of the picture concerns a warrior who falls in love with a beautiful lady and insists on having her even though he knows she is married and very much in love with her husband. The solution to this old plot situation is worked out on a high moral plane that fits perfectly the poetic quality of the screenplay and sets. Machiko Kyo is extraordinarily lovely as the wife; and although Kazuo Hasegawa seems to ham it up at times as the man determined to have her, he succeeds in conveying the overwhelming force of passion and the equally forceful contrition that comes over him later when he realizes what he has done.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

THEORY AND PRACTICE

The New Conservatism

WILLIAM V. SHANNON

EVENTS since the second world war have unexpectedly restored conservatism to high intellectual fashion. The thrust of Soviet imperialism and the nature of its internal system have made it clear that the totalitarianism of Hitler was not the aberration of a decade but rather the portent of a general regression from humane values. Here at home, an uneasy inflated economy, the impairment of civil liberties, and a prevailing mood of political torpor have shaken the bases of liberal confidence. We lay adrift, in Eliot's phrase, in the doldrums of the winds of doctrine.

A group of younger writers have, in our present necessities, redirected attention to the vitality and relevance of the conservative tradition. Peter Viereck has rediscovered Metternich. McGeorge Bundy has placed before us the portrait of a great American conservative, Henry Stimson. William Buckley has expressed his anguish at the "liberal" quality of education at Yale. A host of other writers have deplored the effects of John Dewey's progressivism on our public schools. Naturalism in literature has given way to the New Critics, a Henry James revival, and a general preoccupation with the interplay of moral values and codes of manners. The works of Edmund Burke have been reprinted and given serious attention for the first time in decades. The instinct to conservatism is everywhere apparent. Its practical purposes are a good deal less so.

Russell Kirk's new book, *A Program for Conservatives* [Regnery, $4], is an attempt to give form to this conservative drift. The author, however, whose earlier work, *The Conservative Mind,* was a conspicuously able exposition of the history of the conservative

Mr. Shannon, co-author of *The Truman Merry-Go-Round*, is Washington correspondent of the New York *Post*.

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tradition, here has failed. This is a lucid, often witty and entertaining, but nonetheless sterile book. It is not a program; it is a lament.

The new-conservative thinkers frequently complain that their critics fail to understand the real meaning of the term "conservative." It is therefore necessary, at the start of a discussion of Mr. Kirk's book, to know exactly what we are talking about. There is, first of all, a conservative philosophical tradition which found distinguished expression in the writings of such men as Burke and Coleridge and, in this country, of Hamilton, Adams, and Calhoun. In the twentieth century, it has persisted in terms of social and literary (but not political) criticism in the works of an Irving Babbitt and a Paul Elmer More. On the other hand, however, there is the practical politics of the right. If the terms "liberal" and "conservative" have any *political* meaning in the United States, they must be defined primarily in economic terms. In the struggle of competing interest groups, the American "conservatives" have identified themselves with the interests of business and the "liberals" with those of low-income groups. It is in this sense that the Eisenhower Administration is considered "conservative."

In Britain, the dichotomy between conservatism as a philosophic position and conservatism as a political expression of economic interest has not been wide because England has produced a succession of modern statesmen from Disraeli to Churchill who were estimable conservatives in both senses of the word. In the United States, however, this has not been true. We have had isolated figures such as Henry Stimson and Elihu Root and Charles Evans Hughes, but for more than a century, we have not had an intellectually respectable, philosophically-centered conservative party.

The Republican party, by default, has occupied the "conservative" position in politics. It has and does surely represent conservative economic interests but it defends them in terms of the ideas of the Manchester liberals or of no ideas at all. It is often alien to the traditional conservative notions of community, social order and civil liberty. Theodore Roosevelt is the only Republican leader of the twentieth century who tried to fuse conservative politics and conservative tradition. He failed and was driven out of the party. Another encouraging attempt seemed in prospect in 1948 when Thomas Dewey defeated Harold Stassen in the Oregon primary on a civil liberties issue. This prospect appears to have died aborning with Mr. Dewey's defeat for the presidency that year. Certainly the recent speeches of Dewey, Nixon and Brownell provide no hope that the "Eisenhower Republicans" understand the meaning of a responsible conservatism. It is equally certain that demagogues of the McCarthy-Jenner type are not conservatives in any real meaning of the term. They are, rather, radicals and subversive of the conservative and liberal traditions alike. Hamilton and Jefferson, Burke and Paine would have stood as one against them. Yet, sad to say, too many of the American new-conservatives have been strangely willing to keep them company.

MR. Kirk befuddles this issue of two kinds of conservatism at the outset of his book. "Conservatism," he says, "is not simply the concern of the people who have a great deal of property and influence: it is a social concept important to everyone who desires equal justice and personal freedom and all the lovable old ways of humanity."

"Conservatives," he adds, are "a number of persons, of all classes and occupations, whose view of life is reverential, who tend to be guided by the wisdom of their ancestors, instead of abstract speculation."

What are we to make of these definitions? Most liberals would insist, and rightly so, that they cherish "equal justice and personal freedom and all the lovable old ways of humanity." Mr. Kirk's refusal to recognize the economic basis of practical politics introduces an enormous confusion and distortion into much of his subsequent analysis. Politics, of course, are not entirely structured by economics, but any political analysis that ignores the role of economic interest is hopelessly inadequate. Mr. Kirk's unreal stance on this fundamental question enables him to evade the most compelling problem confronting the new-conservatives: how to relate the old and honorable tradition of philosophical conservatism to existing social problems in terms of the prevailing power structure in American society.

It is true that ideas rule the world, but ideas change the world only when some sizable group of men act upon them. The new-conservatives must be more explicit and practical about the mechanics of power if theirs is not to remain a closet philosophy. To define conservatives merely as diverse individuals "whose view of life is reverential" leaves conservatism with about the same practical status as Trotskyism or the single tax theory, with no possible recourse save exhortation.

Edmund Burke, it should be remembered, embedded his most memorable ideas in specific and detailed works on the most pressing issues of his day, the American and French Revolutions. Coleridge was an active controversialist engaged in the debates of his time. *A Program for Conservatives* is rich in quotations from these earlier great conservatives, but we cannot redeem a mid-twentieth century world in violent flux by chewing over the gnarled crusts of Burke and Coleridge. The dough of conservative thought is nourishing but it must be baked again, so to speak, in contemporary ovens.

If we would test Mr. Kirk's conservative ideas by

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the standards of the legislation of the last twenty years, we might find, I think, that the United States has had no sounder conservative administration than that of Franklin D. Roosevelt, though we may be sure that Mr. Kirk does not think of himself as in any sense a New Dealer. Would a conservative seek to protect the savings of the ordinary man? The Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation did that. Would a conservative promote individual home ownership? The Home Owners Loan Corporation did that. Would a conservative avoid laying waste "the [material] portion of our posterity"? The New Deal organized the greatest soil conservation program in history. Would the conservative encourage the small farmer? The Resettlement Administration attempted, admittedly not too successfully, to develop subsistence farming. Would the conservative keep control of great government programs on a local basis and close to the people? The corn and wheat production programs of the Agriculture Department go into effect only when approved by a referendum of farmers and are administered by county committees made up of local farmers. Would the conservative encourage groups of individuals to solve their own economic problems? The electric power transmission lines of the Tennessee Valley Authority are owned by municipalities and cooperatives. Would the conservative encourage competition in monopoly industries? The federal government deliberately encouraged the creation of the second and third largest aluminum companies as a check on the previously unrestrained power of the Aluminum Company of America.

This catalogue of New Deal activities may seem to have no place in a review of a book about conservative ideas, yet it seems to this reviewer that some such explicit reading of the record is essential if we are to get the present conservative-liberal debate out of the clouds of theory and back to reality.

Mr. Kirk writes that he subscribes to Senator Taft's fear of "creeping socialism" and believes we are most likely to lose our liberties by means of the slow accretion of power to the federal government acting for humanitarian purposes "in a fit of absence of mind." He cites the federal school lunch program as an example of the kind of minor benevolent activity the government may engage in innocently and yet with the ultimate result of having the government do something quite local in nature. He ignores, however, the crucial fact that the federal budget has increased nearly tenfold since 1938 and the power of the federal government has correspondingly grown entirely because of the burden of fighting first a world war and then a cold war. Senator Taft realized this and in the last years of his life was attracted to some highly dubious theories of military strategy since military expenditures were the only section of the budget where any important reductions were possible. Armies and bombs, not school lunches and rural electricity, are the sources of big government and high taxes.

Moreover, in all of Mr. Kirk's discussion of statism he says nothing about the power of private monopoly. He defends the private enterprise economy "as a means to an end." That end he writes, "is a society just and free, in which every man has a right to what is his own, and to what he inherits from his father, and to the rewards of his own ability and industry; a society which cherishes variety and individuality, and rises superior to the dreary plain of socialism. A conservative society enables men to be truly human persons, not mere specks in a collective tapioca-pudding society."

These are admirable sentiments from which few could dissent. Yet does General Motors or U. S. Steel or any other large corporation promote "variety and individuality"? Obviously not. Mr. Kirk is too shrewd an observer to argue otherwise. He advocates industrial decentralization. How this is to come about he does not say. Forty years ago, Justice Brandeis crusaded against bigness in business. In the thirties, the New Dealers waged a vigorous anti-trust campaign. These efforts ended in failure. Government may be able to restrain the growth of monopoly and large-scale industry. It is scarcely likely to restore the conditions of a century ago. As Emmanuel Mounier and others have pointed out, any attack on the dehumanizing character of modern industry and technology must begin by accepting those instrumentalities of modern economic life as given facts, not by a hopeless yearning and a barren nostalgia for the irretrievable past of small shops and craft guilds.

RUSSELL Kirk's *A Program for Conservatives* is most worthwhile when it turns away from political and economic issues and focuses on cultural problems. As a conservative, Mr. Kirk is properly concerned about safeguarding the values of self-reliance, local independence, social variety, and spontaneity. To the secularist, Benthamite tendency toward collective planning in the name of abstract human happiness he ascribes many of the defects of modern society. However, his analysis tends at this point to confound cultural effects with political causes.

He does not distinguish clearly enough between the political order and the social order, between what belongs to the state and what belongs to society. The task of the state is to create those *minimum* conditions of security and order in which men can seek the good life. Men who work too hard and under unhealthy circumstances, who dwell in slums, who see few opportunities for their children, and who face the terrors of poverty in their old age cannot create the

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good society. The experience of France, Italy, and pre-Hitler Germany shows that such mass deprivations and sufferings breed Communism and other forms of catastrophic totalitarianism. A conservative, it would seem, should cherish and affirm corrective actions by the state such as minimum wages, public housing, legally-enforced collective bargaining, and farm price supports which diminish the demand for radical change.

On the other hand, the defects and dilemmas in our culture which range from ugly houses and unsightly billboards to the unwise use of leisure and the cult of the machine are issues properly the concern of society and not the state. An attack on the government's welfare programs does not solve them.

In a larger sense, Mr. Kirk locates the source of our difficulties in the revolutionary nature of our time, its rootlessness, its passion for change, its rapid liquidation of old social hierarchies and ways of living, and Mr. Kirk is at his most disappointing in his discussions on this level. For here he betrays again and again a mere futile yearning for the ordered past of a pre-democratic age.

The democratic era is less than two centuries old—a very brief span as history reckons time. It has come into being through revolutions, some relatively peaceful, some bloody and violent. Revolutions do exact their toll as D. W. Brogan has reminded us in his finely-tempered book, *The Price of Revolution*. The age of democratic revolutions has had its failures and disasters, but it has accomplished much and promises more. It is far too early to suggest that democratic societies may not in the long run safeguard more effectively than their predecessors the values which men of all ages have cherished—love, honor, duty, courage before death, and humility before God. Religion, humane learning, the arts, and all the other private and community endeavors which inculcate and secure those values flourish as well (or better) in an open society as in any other.

The mold of the past is indeed broken. Men in democratic countries are now more free to explore the limits of those talents with which God endowed them. They are free to create aristocracies of talent to replace the old élites based on birth and wealth. The conservatives are right when they say that happiness, in so far as it can be attained on earth, is not the product of state planning. But the state's task remains to insure those minimum conditions of justice and security without which man's pursuit of happiness is impossible at all. This is the practical challenge which Mr. Kirk and the other new-conservatives fail to meet, so intent are they on the evocation of noble, but nebulous, sentiment. We still await a concretized program for conservatives. Until one is offered we cannot take new-conservative complaints against the present too seriously.

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The Re-evaluation of an Eminent Victorian

CARDINAL MANNING: His Life And Labours. By Shane Leslie. Kenedy. $3.75.

By ALBAN BAER

NO one has suffered more from his biographers than Cardinal Manning. He was the victim of not one, but two antipathetic pens. First came the quasi-official two-volume *Life* by the journalist Purcell, whom in an unguarded moment Manning had entrusted with his private papers. Then followed the almost fatal thrust of the brilliant Bloomsburyite Lytton Strachey, dealt in 1918 in the essay which holds pride of place in *Eminent Victorians*. Even the pungent wit of Sir Shane Leslie in his *Life and Labours* of 1921 availed little or nothing against the superior powers of his immediate predecessor.

But now Lytton Strachey himself has suffered that temporary or permanent eclipse which after a certain time seems to fall to the lot of every writer, and by way of celebrating the centenary of Manning's entrance into the Church, Sir Shane has reduced his five-hundred-page 1921 biography to a handy volume of little over half that size. He was well advised to do so. Nothing really essential has been omitted and the narrative gains immeasurably in force, without at the same time suffering a notable loss of coherence.

It is clear that Strachey's chief error was to compare Manning and Newman and to state the result solely in terms of Newman. Manning is bound to lose by such a comparison. He had not Newman's sensitivity or profundity of thought; he made no pretense to be a literary man or an academic; he was not a speculative theologian or philosopher. And it is also clear from Sir Shane's book that Manning freely acknowledged these shortcomings and admitted, not on one occasion only, but periodically throughout his career, that the qualities and abilities he lacked were present in Newman. Nor did his lack of them tend to make him narrow or parochial. He cannot be thus described who sat on Royal Commissions, corresponded with ambassadors, prime ministers, and Anglican bishops, and welcomed exchange of views with materialists and agnostics. Manning was just as eager as Newman that the Church make its mark in English life. (This is not to deny that he made mistakes; Sir Shane does not attempt to palliate them. The South Kensington University scheme was one; his refusal to allow Catholics to attend Oxford and Cambridge—though he did not object to London—probably another, though his reasons may have been much more apparent in the seventies and eighties of the last century than they are today.)

Not only does a comparison of Manning with Newman result in lessening of the former's stature, it leaves unrecorded Manning's very real positive achievements—achievements as much outside Newman's range as Newman's were outside his own. Manning was ahead of his times in his grasp of the capital-labor problem. His positive contribution to Catholic sociology emerges overwhelmingly as one reads those portions which Sir Shane includes of Manning's correspondence with Cardinal Gibbons, Archbishop Ireland, Henry George, Ben Tillet, and others concerned with the social issues of the day; as one sees how Manning anticipated the doctrine of Leo XIII and Pius XI in the great labor encyclicals; and finally, as one follows the absorbing story of the London dock strike of 1889 and observes how Manning remained on hand to settle the conflict long after the Lord Mayor and Bishop Temple had retired from the scene in disgust.

Even Archbishop Benson of Canterbury, no particular friend of Manning, was obliged to record in his diary: "Cardinal Manning has done well in London. But why has my dear Bishop of London [Temple] gone back and left it to him?" Strachey's implication that Manning's influence at Rome ceased with the death of Pius IX is shown again and again to be false: one has only to notice that when *Rerum Novarum* appeared, many of its sentences were seen to correspond remarkably with sentences in Manning's letter to the Congress of Liège the preceding year to realize his importance.

There are other interesting sidelights in this book: Msgr. Manning's friendship with Florence Nightingale, who narrowly missed being one of his many converts; his recurrent epistolary battles with the *Times*; his fight with the Jesuits (in which Father Herbert Vaughan, his successor at Westminster, played a prominent part); his keen insight on the Irish question (to which two chapters are devoted); to say nothing, of course, of the well-known episode of his role at the Vatican Council.

Some things, it is true, are skimmed over. Sir Shane does not tell us as much as we would like to know about the intercepted letter of Newman's and the notice in the *Times* reporting his refusal of the Red Hat; nor does he waste many words on the Cardinal's teetotalism. But he has given us enough otherwise to compel us not to judge hastily or rashly one who, though admittedly ambitious and fond of power, harnessed that ambition and power to help and speak for those who at that time could not help and speak for themselves.

The savant may well forget Cardinal Manning: the laboring man can ill afford to do so. At any rate, we must not overlook the fact that the very completeness of Manning's success in his own pursuits will always tend to make him unpopular with those who have less ability and smaller energy for those pursuits; and will exalt and advance the work while at the same time it will dim the memory of the man.

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Queen, Prophet, and Reformer

SAINT BRIDGET OF SWEDEN. By Johannes Jorgensen. 2 Vols. Translated by Ingeborg Lung. Longmans. $8.50.

By KARL STERN

BRIDGET, the great Saint of Sweden, one of those extraordinary woman figures of the Middle Ages, has not been given sufficient attention by modern writers. Compared to such figures as Saint Catherine of Siena or Saint Joan of Arc she seems to be standing in a shadowy corner. The reason may be that she came from a now Protestant nation, and that to the modern literary craftsmen of her country she does not represent a natural subject. Yet her life story has considerable didactic significance for our time. It touches upon the meaning of womanhood, the problem of the prophetic element in Christianity, the problem of reform within the Church, and many things which move us deeply at the present moment.

Saint Bridget was a wife and a mother; she was remarkable for her corporal works of mercy and for her exhortation of the clergy; she was famous as a pilgrim and as a seeress. In view of the fact that Sweden should play such an important part later in the history of the Reformation it is noteworthy that her astonishing frankness about the corruption of the clergy was equaled only by her firm stand on the untouchable sacramental character of the sacerdotal office. She, whose words about some of the Roman clergy are just as ruthless as those of Luther two hundred years later, was at the same time most emphatic on the Real Presence. (It is somewhat surprising to learn that, according to Jörgensen, the latter was a stumbling block for the belief of the peasants of her time.)

Hagiography is a most difficult subject. In writing up a saint's life one must avoid treacle but one must also not be too dry and academic; there must not be any pious cushion embroidery but there should not emerge an atlas of microphotographs. Johannes Jörgensen, beloved the world over for his work on Saint Francis of Assisi and Saint Catherine of Siena, has proved in his previous work that he is able to sail safely between all the possible danger points. In the present work he has, in essence, followed the same course and reached the same goal. However, he intersperses his narrative with so many asides (analogies from other persons and events, personal reminiscences of places and friends, hundreds of anecdotal tidbits, that the figure of his heroine is in danger of losing contour.

It is, particularly in our times, a good thing to read a "long" story, rambling, and of leisurely rhythm. But in the present case, in spite of Mr. Jörgensen's wit and charm, one comes to a point of losing inner contact with the subject. This is regrettable just because of the surprising timeliness of that marvelous woman. In spite of such shortcoming one may expect that all the love and erudition which went into this biography should give it the same classical standing as Jörgensen's previous works.

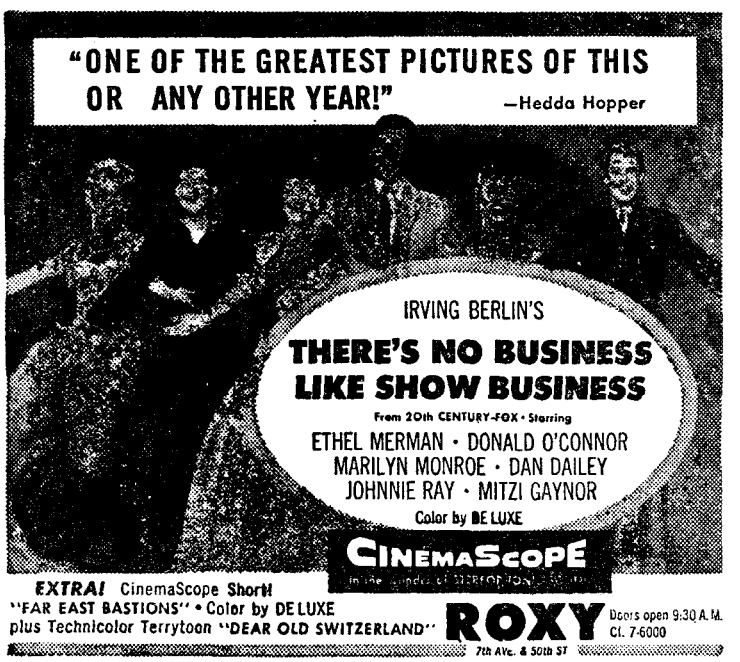
The Moment of Cosmic Ennui

WAITING FOR GODOT. By Samuel Beckett. Grove Press. $4.75.

By EDWIN KENNEBECK

SAMUEL Beckett, a forty-eight-year-old Irishman who was once James Joyce's secretary, now lives in Paris and writes in French. His earlier work, published in England, includes two novels, poetry, and an essay on James Joyce in that book about *Finnegans Wake* whose title begins "Our Exagmination Round His Factification. . . . " *Waiting for Godot,* Beckett's first play, opened in Paris in the winter of 1952, with much success. Now, in a slim, expensive edition, this two-act play becomes the first of Beckett's full-length works to appear in this country. The translation is by Beckett himself.

Waiting for Godot is an almost textureless "tragicomedy." The language seldom exploits style, metaphor, connotation, though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when these do appear they count for a great deal. Unlike Tennessee Williams' "Camino Real," which also attempted a symbolic commentary on the, or *a*, human condition, but was almost all texture, Beckett's play offers very few "commentaries," only a smattering of wit (though that is mordant and assured), a spare and dis-allusioned vocabulary.

The situation is simple: two old tramps, their lives of action behind them, bored and dismayed to a point where ordinary boredom and dismay might seem thrilling, wait on a bare stretch of road, near a tree, for Godot. Who Godot is nobody knows. He is simply that for which one waits when one has sunk to the bottom, finally touching with heavy feet the very floor of ennui. And not knowing who Godot is is part of the predicament.

This point of standstill is a hideous place; mind, soul and imagination dim out, lie motionless, stirring only in automatic response to some external nudge. One of the tramps, Estragon, complains about his sore feet, struggles to take his boots off; the other one, Vladimir, removes his bowler, looks inside and finds nothing, puts it on again. They discuss briefly the thief at Christ's side on the Cross who was saved. Then silence falls; it is necessary to find something to talk about—anything whether or not to commit suicide, whether Godot really said he would come, whether an adequate conversation can be made out of some minor disagreement.

This must be one of the cruelest uses of laughter—Beckett's deliberate *bathètique*. One would not find it in Kafka or Camus or Sartre. In Joyce? At least the comedy in *Finnegans Wake* seems to have some spirit of fun. *Waiting for Godot* isn't fun. The laughter it engenders in a theater must have a strange, embarrassed sound. There they are, those two peculiar men fooling around with carrots and hats, at the fag end of their era, evidently finished with their "gratuitous acts" and now with no place to go. A small boy appears twice, to announce that Godot has had to postpone his arrival, but will come soon. The play ends where it began. Vladimir and Estragon have spoken about separating, but it is clear that they cannot. They seem to recognize that if there is one evil left for them to experience, it is to be parted from each other. Nothing new has happened to the two tramps, we have merely seen their situation.

It is as if we had looked into a moment of cosmic ennui, despite the low-down tone of the piece. Neither edifying nor purgative, the play nonetheless has an effect; it is appalling and desperate, and not false or pretentious. What an audience could say about it after the final curtain I can't imagine, unless it be something like the respectful words of Jean Anouilh, quoted on the jacket: "Nothing happens, nobody comes, nobody goes, it is *terrible*." *Waiting for Godot* works a little like Eliot's "The Confidential Clerk"; the predicament, the fact, is so immediately rendered that we can scarcely grasp it for wanting to explain it.

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A Native Myth

THE SELF-MADE MAN IN AMERICA. By Irvin G. Wyllie. Rutgers University. $4.

By JOHN COURNOS

VIRTUE, so we have been told, is its own reward. Mr. Wyllie, however, makes it clear that it was not thus regarded by our great financial magnates who rose "from rags to riches" in the latter part of the nineteenth century, overlapping into the twentieth. They thought that virtue should be made to pay, and pay well. Their own vast fortunes, they maintained, were due wholly to their diligence, frugality, temperate living, and, above all to their moral worthiness. They ardently believed in the "self-made" man, and his magical abilities to reach the heights of success on the principle that there was always "room at the top."

Andrew Carnegie and his fellow capitalists assumed the right to their great wealth by virtue of their virtue. Nor were they alone in holding this opinion. A host of famous clergymen—Henry Ward Beecher, Lyman Abbott, Russell Conwell and Horatic Alger among them—supported them, and by so teaching, avers Mr. Wyllie, "they encouraged each generation to believe that it was possible to serve both God and Mammon."

On the other hand, maintaining as they did that wealth was a trust conferred upon them by the Almighty, and fearing perhaps that they had been just a little too insistent on their virtue, the self-made capitalists began to endow museums, libraries and colleges, though previously many had publicly expressed contempt for mere learning. The fact is, with the rise of trusts and great centralizations of wealth, they were bound to learn that their espousal of the "rags to riches" principle no longer held. Indeed, they must have learned to see eye to eye with the distinguished political scientist, who exclaimed: "Self-made men, indeed! Why don't you tell me of a self-laid egg?" In any case, the time came when complacent executives could no longer bother to train a man who began with sweeping the floor in the office and ended up as a partner.

Though Mr. Wyllie has debunked a popular myth, he admits that it is by no means dead. "Belief in the self-made man requires only an act of faith . . . the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." A provocative book, one wonders why someone has not written it before.

AFRICA—WORLD OF NEW MEN. By John J. Considine. Dodd, Mead. $4.

AMERICANS have been conscious for some time now that the peoples of the Dark Continent are in ferment, that this is a period of major change. Beyond their almost universal resentment against colonial status we normally encounter little to indicate what the ultimate destination of these peoples will be. Father Considine of Maryknoll provides a hopeful note by presenting here some of the remarkable strides now being taken under missionary auspices.

He has tremendous hopes for the Belgian Congo, where close cooperation between the missionaries and the Government has resulted in institutions for education and mercy that are "the strongest proportionately in all Africa . . . 40 per cent of the entire school-age population is at school." Technical training and medical facilities are extensive. Father Considine is also greatly taken with the dignified bearing of the Congolese. "They hold their heads high, friendly confidence shines in their eyes. . . ." This handsomely illustrated and highly readable volume is an inspiring account of a great human awakening and challenging human prospects.

REVIEWERS

Dom Alban Baer, O.S.B., is a monk of Portsmouth Priory in Rhode Island.

Karl Stern is the author of *Pillar of Fire* and *The Third Revolution*.

Edwin Kennebeck is associated with Funk and Wagnalls publishing house in New York.

John Cournos is a well-known critic and authority on Americana.

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